

# ND PROJECT MANAGEMENT NEWS

A Newsletter for Project Managers

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Welcome to the third issue of the North Dakota Project Management Newsletter! The purpose of this newsletter is to bring you information about project management-related topics and events in North Dakota (ND) Government and Higher Education.

## PM News

### ***North Dakota Project Management Guidebook in Final Stages***

The Preface, Origination, Initiation, Planning, and Execution and Control chapters of the *North Dakota Project Management Guidebook* have been reviewed and discussed by the Enterprise Project Management (EPM) Advisory Group. This leaves only the chapter on Closing, and some final work on tools and templates before the guidebook can be released. The *North Dakota Project Management Guidebook* will be a complete project management methodology for use by North Dakota State Government and Higher Education. It is based on the *New York State Government Project Management Guidebook* and has been customized by the EPM Advisory Group. To request a draft copy, please contact Mark Molesworth at 328-4474 or [epmadmin@state.nd.us](mailto:epmadmin@state.nd.us).

### **EPM Website and Enterprise Project Sharing System**

The Enterprise Project Management (EPM) Website and Enterprise Project Sharing System are preparing to launch!

State leaders, agency executives, IT professionals, and project managers who access the EPM website will have access to a wealth of information and resources. The site is designed to guide the Project Management novice to helpful training and resources, while providing the experienced project manager with the tools to manage virtually any size or type of project. Some highlights of the EPM Website include the *North Dakota Project Management Guidebook*, links to on-going enterprise projects and initiatives, training and certification resources, standards and policies, and the Enterprise Project Sharing System.

The Enterprise Project Sharing System is a tool available to North Dakota state project managers, enabling agencies and other government entities to share information regarding their

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planned, active, and completed projects. The type of information captured includes project business cases, charters, project plans, technologies deployed, lessons learned, and post project reviews. This collaborative tool will be a key component in the communication and sharing of project management throughout the enterprise.

The initial launch date is set for August 1, 2004. While we are off to a great start, the work is far from finished. We envision this website to be in perpetual growth as we learn and share in the field of Project Management.

## Ask the EPM Advisory Group

**Question** – When I submit a deliverable for review and acceptance, I sometimes receive comments after the established deadline. In other cases, reviewers are identifying issues that should have been identified and resolved during prior reviews. What can I do to ensure that reviewers complete the process timely and thoroughly?

**Answer** – Great question! What we are talking about is managing the acceptance of deliverables. Typically, an acceptance management process is developed during the planning phase and documents:

- The definition of “acceptance”
- The criteria that must be met for each deliverable to be considered “acceptable”
- The number and identity of customers designated to be reviewers of each deliverable – typically reviewers are experts in the subject matter the deliverable covers
- The number and identity of customers designated to be approvers – approvers have the authority to sign the approval form, indicating acceptance
- The number of business days in which deliverables must be either approved or rejected by the reviewers and approvers
- The number of times a deliverable can be resubmitted
- The escalation process that will be followed if a timely decision on approval or rejection of a deliverable is not met

Having a process that includes this information is a great start, but what if the criteria are in place, but not being followed by the reviewers? If, in the planning phase, you suspect problems will occur, there are additional measures available.

You may choose to be very specific when authoring the escalation process by including wording such as: “If the review is not completed per the schedule, approval will be assumed.”

To ensure the reviewers take ownership of their responsibility, consider setting the expectation that with each new iteration of the deliverable, the reviewers are only allowed to comment on the modifications made since the last review. This is a strong stance, and should be reserved for those times when it is truly necessary. This expectation must be set with the reviewers upfront – prior to the first review of the deliverable.

In addition, the failure to follow the process could be a risk to scope, schedule, quality

and/or budget. Consider identifying the failure to comply with the acceptance management process in the Risk Management Plan. Individuals seldom want to be identified as a contributor to “risk” as risks are typically reported to the Executive Steering Committee.

It is important to remember that there may be outside influences that are impacting the reviewers. For instance, the reviewers may not be completing their tasks because of other workload. You may be able to work with the reviewer’s supervisor to re-schedule other work. Basically, you cannot rely solely on the written plans. You must manage the plan and work with the reviewers to ensure success. Staying on top of the process will allow you to avoid surprises and give you the opportunity to rectify issues before they grow into problems.

*The North Dakota Enterprise Project Management (EPM) Advisory Group is a small workgroup of project managers who proactively identify project management issues, and assist in the collection and development of project management best practices such as tools and templates. Have a question for the EPM Advisory Group? Send it to Mark Molesworth at [epmadmin@state.nd.us](mailto:epmadmin@state.nd.us).*

## Featured PM Web Sites

- **The Minnesota Chapter of the Project Management Institute (MN-PMI)**  
The MN-PMI Chapter celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. This site is a good example of a successful PMI chapter and includes information regarding certification, training, and local events.  
<http://www.pmi-mn.org>
- **Cheetah Learning**  
Cheetah Learning provides a variety of Project Management training ranging from introductory to executive level. Their most notable program is the PMP® exam preparation course.  
  
“Cheetah Learning’s patent pending techniques, methodology and documented success enable us to guarantee that our students pass the Project Management Professional (PMP®) exam on the fifth day after spending four days in our program.”  
<http://www.cheetahlearning.com>
- **Microsoft Project User Group – MPUG Global**  
MPUG-Global is the official international community supporting Microsoft® Office Project.  
<http://www.mpug.org/>



## Featured PM Article

- **Do Your Project Managers Measure?**

Agencies, tired of wishful thinking, may require management staff to be certified.

Please visit the following link to read this issue's featured article "Do Your Project Managers Measure?"

<http://www.fcw.com/fcw/articles/2003/1103/spec-pmcomp-11-03-03.asp>



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